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Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance

Advancement of women

Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees: questions relating to refugees and displaced persons and humanitarian questions

Promotion and protection of the rights of children

Human rights questions

Economic and Social Council
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Special economic, humanitarian and disaster relief assistance

Letter dated 9 July 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the appeal adopted by the republican meeting devoted to the problems of refugees and internally displaced persons in Azerbaijan to the heads of States, Parliaments and international organizations throughout the world, issued at Baku on 27 June 1998 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under items 20, 106, 108, 109, 113 of the provisional agenda, and as a document of the substantive session of 1998 of the Economic and Social Council, under item 5 of the provisional agenda.

(*Signed*) Eldar G. **Kouliev**
Permanent Representative

* A/53/150

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Annex

To the Heads of States, Parliaments and international organizations throughout the world

We, the participants in the republican meeting devoted to the problems of refugees and internally displaced persons in the Republic of Azerbaijan, want to draw your attention to the intolerable condition of over a million refugees who have been driven from their historical territories as a result of the policy of ethnic cleansing of Armenia carried out at the State level and to the plight of the internally displaced Azerbaijanis who have lost over 20 per cent of their native lands and have unwillingly become internally displaced persons at a time when the ending of the bloody conflicts of our planet has become the common concern of all peace-loving mankind.

In the twentieth century, the Azerbaijan people have several times felt the grievous results of the policy of genocide pursued by Armenia in connection with the latter's territorial claims to Azerbaijan, subjecting the Azerbaijanis to mass deportations and massacres.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, from 1905 to 1907, tens of thousands of Azerbaijanis were murdered because of their nationality, their houses and mosques put to fire, historical monuments destroyed and their houses lost to them.

In March of 1918, about 30,000 Azerbaijanis were killed by armed Armenian detachments, with unimaginable brutality, in Baku; 7,000 were slaughtered in Shamakhi; 122 villages were completely destroyed in the province of Guba; mass murders took place.

The mass deportation of Azerbaijanis from the territory of Armenia from 1948 to 1953 was a historical crime committed against our nation. The adoption of a special resolution by the Council of Ministers of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the deportation of Azerbaijanis from the territory of Armenia to Azerbaijan in 1947 was one of the achievements of Armenia, enabling Armenia to carry out a policy of ethnic cleansing at the State level.

In 1988, Armenia began a new stage of its occupation policy against Azerbaijan, with an obvious help of its supporters. Over 250,000 Azerbaijanis were driven from their historical-ethnic lands in Armenia within a few days, with unimaginable cruelty and violence.

Thus, in essence, the groundless territorial claims against Azerbaijan gave birth to the known Upper Garabag conflict, started by a group of Armenian separatists.

Since 1991, the Upper Garabag and the adjoining districts of Azerbaijan have been subjected to the intervention of armed Armenian detachments, 17,000 square kilometres of territory have been occupied, over 900 towns and villages, 600 schools and educational institutions, 100,000 houses, 250 medical institutions, 1,000 industrial enterprises, religious and cultural monuments, railways, bridges and cemeteries have been destroyed and plundered.

About 20,000 Azerbaijanis have been killed in the Upper Garabag conflict, over 50,000 physically injured and thousands of old men, women and children taken hostages and subjected to the intolerable suffering of captivity.

In 1992, an action of brutality, using the most extreme and unimaginable punitive methods, was committed against the peaceful civilians in the town of Khojaly: 800 people were killed. It is known in history as the genocide of Khojaly.

As a result of the Armenian aggression, over a million people have found shelters in tent camps, prefabricated houses, railway carriages and other places not fit for living.

Armenia completely ignores the resolutions of the Security Council (822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993), 884 (1993)) and acts against the will of the world community.

The States of the world are well aware of the consistent, principal and decisive policy and constructive position of the Republic of Azerbaijan directed to the fair solution of the Upper Garabag conflict. The main principles for the peaceful solution of the conflict through negotiations were approved by 53 States at the Lisbon summit of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in December of 1996.

The Azerbaijan people and we, the refugees and internally displaced persons, who have witnessed the horrors of the war, are against the war. We denounce all kinds of ethnic separation and national conflicts, we want to live in peace with our neighbours and to enjoy ordinary human rights.

Nevertheless, we, the participants at this meeting, want to focus your attention on the fact that the present administration of Armenia has determined to join the Upper Garabag to Armenia, which contradicts the Charter of the United Nations and the objective principles of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and other influential international organizations concerning the peaceful solution of the conflict. We, the refugees and displaced persons, as well as the whole Azerbaijani nation, express our protest and anger against such statements.

We believe that the voice of over a million of the Azerbaijani refugees and displaced persons will be heard and that the world community, Parliaments and international organizations will put political, economic and diplomatic pressure on Armenia.

We are inhabitants of the same planet and must jointly fight against those who threaten our common house with death and blood. We hope that the world community, Parliaments and international organizations will support the restoration of justice for the sake of the happy future of nations who will step into the twenty-first century, for the sake of justice and the triumph of the highest human goals.

We are for a peaceful solution of the Upper Garabag conflict, and, once more, express our confidence that, as a result of the joint efforts of the world community, Parliaments, international organizations, the territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan will be provided, the refugees and the internally displaced persons will return to their native homes!